

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: APRIL 14 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON

1. SYRIAN MEDIA FOCUSED ON INTERNATIONAL REACTION TO ASAD'S SPEECH. AL-BAATH BANNERED: "ARAB AND WORLD INTEREST IN PRESIDENT'S SPEECH. SPEECH IS QUIDE TO ACTION FOR ALL SINCERE ARAB EFFORTS. SYRIAN POSITION IS TRIUMPH FOR LEBANON AND PALESTINE REVOLUTION. DENUNCIATION OF CON-

SPIRATORIAL ROLE OF EGYPTIAN SYSTEM IN LEBANON." AL-THAWRAH HEADLINED: "POPULAR WELCOME FOR PRESIDENT'S SPEECH ALL OVER ARAB REGION. SYRIA OUTLINES DIMENSIONS OF PLOT. ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION MEDIA POINT OUT THAT SYRIA IS COMMITTED TO PRINCIPLED POSITION BY ANNOUNCING READINESS TO PROTECT THOSE OPPRESSED IN LEBANON." ACCOMPANYING ARTICLES REPORTED THAT BEIRUT RADIO UNCLASSIFIED

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REBROADCAST ASAD'S SPEECH NUMEROUS TIMES. PRESS CITED

PHONE POLL TAKEN BY WORLD NEWS AGENCY OF SOME INHABITANTS OF BEIRUT MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN DISTRICTS WHICH REVEALED OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR ASAD'S SPEECH AMONG CITIZENRY. PRESS CITED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM BEIRUTI AL-ANWAR AND FROM KAWATI PRESS, ADDING THAT KUWAITI CIRCLES DENOUNCED "CONSPIRATORIAL ROLE OF EGYPT IN LEBANON."

2. PRESS REPORTED Wafa RELEASE DENYING WIRE SERVICE DISPATCHES ABOUT ALLEGED MESSAGE FROM ARAFAT TO SADAT. Wafa CLAIMED ARAFAT DID NOT SEND MESSAGE AND CONCLUDED, "FACT THAT SOME WORLD NEWS AGENCIES REPORT SUCH UNFOUNDED NEWS WITHOUT CONFIRMING IT WITH PALESTINIAN SOURCES IS TO BE REGRETTED."

3. PRES. ASAD MET APRIL 13 WITH LEBANESE BAATHIST LEADER QANSU TO REVIEW LEBANESE SITUATION. PRESS ALSO REPORTED THAT KHADDAM RECEIVED FRENCH ENVOY GORSE IN PRESENCE OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR. GORSE TOLD SANA THAT, "THE SITUATION IN LEBANON WAS EXTENSIVELY REVIEWED. WE EXCHANGED VIEWPOINTS ON PRESENT SITUATION AND MEANS OF FACILITATING RESTORATION OF PEACE WHICH IS FOCUS OF ATTENTION OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES."

4. TISHRIIN REPORTED THAT AMB. BROWN RESUMED CONTACTS WITH LEBANESE PARTIES AND ALSO THAT PALESTINIAN LEADERS HAVE DEPLORED ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE IN ARAB DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. TISHRIIN ASSERTED THAT SOME PARTIES WERE TRYING TO ARABIZE OR INTERNATIONALIZE CRISIS IN ORDER TO UNDERMINE SYRIAN INITIATIVE. AL-BAATH LINKED DOD ANNOUNCEMENT OF U.S. NAVAL ACTIVITIES IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN WITH CONTINUED PRESENCE OF AMB. BROWN IN BEIRUT AND TO NEWS AGENCY REPORTS ON EXISTENCE OF AMERICAN PLAN AIMED AT SPLITTING LEBANON INTO SIX CANTONS.

5. COLUMNISTS IN TISHRIIN AND AL-THAWRAH LAUDED PRES. ASAD'S SPEECH. AL-BAATH COLUMNIST, HOWEVER, EMPRESSED BELIEF THAT U.S. ROLE IN LEBANON DIRECTED AGAINST SYRIAN MEDIATION. HE ASSERTED THAT, "AMERICAN STATEMENTS ABOUT WASHINGTON'S SATISFACTION WITH SYRIA'S EFFORTS TO END CRISIS IN LEBANON CAN ONLY FOOL NAIVE INDIVIDUALS AND SERVE

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SOME WHO ARE INTERESTED IN DISTORTING SYRIA'S POSITION AND IN STIRRING UP EMOTIONS OF (LEFTISTS)." HE NOTED THAT PRESS LEAKS HAVE CONTRASTED WITH OFFICIAL AMERICAN STATEMENTS OF SATISFACTION WITH SYRIA. HE WARNED HIS READERS TO "REMEMBER THAT INTERNATIONAL AND ARAB PPAPERS EARLIER

PUBLISHED INFORMATION INDICATING THAT AMERICA WAS PLANNING CONFESSIONAL AND REGIONAL PARTITION OPERATIONS IN SOME

ARAB COUNTRIES," AND OPINED THAT THESE OPERATIONS SERVE PRINCIPLE OF ARABIZING MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. HE NOTED THAT RECENTLY SOME PAPERS PUBLISHED INITIATIVE PRESENTED BY AMB. BROWN WHICH PROPOSED ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL MANDATE FOR LEBANON AND DIVISION OF COUNTRY INTO SEVERAL CANTONS, AND STATED, "OBVIOUSLY, THIS INITIATIVE BY BROWN DOES NOT CONCUR WITH SYRIAN LINE BUT INSTEAD EXPOSES DIRECTION OF AMERICAN POLICY AND IS REFUTATION OF PREVIOUS AMERICAN STATEMENTS." HE CLAIMED THAT AMERICA DID NOT APPRECIATE SYRIAN EFFORTS TO ADVANCE PALESTINIAN CAUSE AND TO OPPOSE SINAI AGREEMENT, AND WAS WORRIED THAT SYRIA HAD BECOME "POLITICAL AND MILITARY CENTER OF REGION PLAYING ROLE SIMILAR TO THAT OF LATE PRES. NASSER." FOR THESE REASONS, U.S. NOW TRYING TO UNDERMINE SYRIAN EFFORTS TO CREATE SOLID ARAB FRONT. RHETORICALLY ASKING WHY U.S. HAD NOT YET FOILED SYRIAN MEDIATION IN LEBANON, COLUMNIST ASSERTED U.S. WORKING TOWARD THIS GOAL, BUT THAT IT LOSES NOTHING THROUGH CONTINUATION OF CONFLICT WHICH BLEEDS PALESTINIANS AND IMMOBILIZES ARAB SITUATION.

6. COMMENT: ANTI-AMERICAN TONE OF SYRIAN PRESS IS UP. PUBLICATION OF DETAILS AMB. BORWN'S ALLEGED "PROPOSAL" HAS FUELED SYRIAN INDICTMENT OF U.S. ROLE IN LEBANON.
MURPHY

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